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Africa Review

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16 November 1984

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President Moi plans to continue his effort to reduce the influence of the Kikuyu tribe—Kenya's largest ethnic group—by replacing Kikuyu officials with members of smaller tribes.

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Articles have been coordinated as appropriate with other offices within CIA. Comments and queries regarding this publication may be directed to the Chief, Production Staff, Office of African and Latin American Analysis, telephone

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Articles

Ethiopia: The Resettlement Program

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In the wake of the famine and drought that has struck Ethiopia, the Mengistu government has resurrected and expanded a population resettlement plan, first proposed in the late 1970s. The scheme would need massive outside assistance to succeed and, if it were implemented only on a limited scale, it probably would still lead to increased peasant support for the northern insurgents.

The Proposal and its Goals

According to the US Embassy in Addis Ababa, the resettlement program calls for the movement of several million people from drought-stricken portions of Tigray, Eritrea, Welo, and Gonder Provinces to more fertile areas in the western and southwestern parts of the country. An Ethiopian official has stated that the government intends to move 250,000 people by the end of December and another 1 million as soon as possible next year.

The government is touting the resettlement program as a means of breaking the cycle of drought and famine in the north by thinning out the population and opening up underutilized but potentially more productive areas of the country to farming. The proposal, however, has other goals that are of equal, if not greater, importance.

The relocation of the northern peasants is designed to cut into the base of support for northern insurgent groups, especially in Tigray Province. Unlike their Eritrean allies, who field a more conventional, self-sufficient military force, the Tigrean guerrillas are heavily dependent on the local population for food, intelligence, and logistic support. Addis Ababa apparently believes the shift of peasants from the combat area would cut deeply into the direct support

provided the insurgency. In addition, it may believe the removal of the peasants from the region will sever their ties to the insurgents and, over the longer term, lessen their commitment to the insurgent cause.

The regime also is attempting to use resettlement to further a basic aim of its agricultural program by reviving the moribund collectivization effort in the northern provinces. Peasant resistance has prevented the establishment of collective farms and peasant associations, depriving the government of a primary means of economic and political control. According to a government spokesman, settlers initially will be given small individual plots to farm, but these holdings will be collectivized soon after they start producing crops.

Prospects and Implications

We doubt the resettlement proposal can be fully implemented. Addis Ababa almost certainly recognizes it lacks the resources to fulfill the stated goals of the plan, given its ability to move only several thousand peasants during a similar program in 1978-79. The Ethiopian leadership has approached both the West and the Eastern Bloc for aid in the project, but has received no firm commitments. In fact, some Western concern has been expressed over humanitarian aspects of the plan, according to Embassy reporting. For example, the regime plans to provide only minimal support to the settlers. Housing will not be provided, although materials for shelter construction will be available, and food will be supplied only until settlers can harvest a crop. The

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regime's inability to follow through in these areas led to the collapse of the previous resettlement scheme.

[REDACTED]

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Addis Ababa also lacks skilled managers and technical experts needed to run the envisioned expansion of collective enterprises. Shortfalls in trained managers and technical expertise already plague the collective and state farms in existence.

[REDACTED]

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Peasant resistance to even a limited resettlement is sure to develop, according to Embassy reporting. Most would oppose leaving behind their families and traditional farmlands for new areas where they would be isolated from the indigenous population by language, customs, and religion. According to the US Embassy, a forced relocation would drive large numbers of new recruits into insurgent ranks, especially in Tigray Province from which most of the settlers probably would be drawn. We believe the immediate impact on the government's counterinsurgency campaign would be minimal because the guerrillas lack the arms and infrastructure to deal with a sudden large increase in their numbers. Over the longer term, however, Addis Ababa's pursuit of highly unpopular policies would increase local sympathy for the guerrillas and require additional forces to meet an expanded insurgent threat.

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South Africa: Strengthening Border and Coastal Defenses [REDACTED]

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Pretoria's successful diplomacy this year has given the South African Defense Force a respite from cross-border operations and an opportunity to strengthen border and coastal defenses neglected somewhat during the long counterinsurgency campaign in Namibia. This year the Defense Force staged its largest ground and air force exercise since World War II, and its most ambitious naval maneuvers since at least the mid-1970s. The training improved the readiness of Pretoria's conventional units and demonstrated South African military strength to neighboring states. The Army operation was part of a reorganization of border defenses opposite Namibia and southern Botswana, and could signal South African preparations for an eventual withdrawal from Namibia. [REDACTED]

Heightened Threat Perception

Senior officers believe the steady buildup of Soviet arms and troops from black African countries is eroding South Africa's military superiority in southern Africa, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Minister of Defense General Malan said in October that the number of armored vehicles and troops in nearby states has more than tripled since 1978. South Africa recently has publicized—and we have confirmed—Soviet deliveries to Angola for the first time of sophisticated MIG-23 combat aircraft, SA-6 missiles, and Hind-D helicopter gunships. Pretoria's concern for its long coastline heightens whenever Soviet warships transit the Cape route to and from the Indian Ocean. [REDACTED]

Military Response

Thunder Chariot. South Africa announced that 11,000 troops, 4,000 vehicles, and more than 70 aircraft participated in operation Thunder Chariot in

September.¹ Testing the Army's ability to mobilize a division of reservists with heavy equipment and deploy it to stop an invasion, Thunder Chariot was held at the remote Battle School at Lohatla near the Botswana border. The three or more brigades assembled had to bring most of their vehicles, arms, and supplies, because the school has no tanks and stores only enough equipment for one infantry brigade to train at a time. [REDACTED] was impressed that planners had overcome severe constraints to wartime mobilization, including finding alternatives to transporting Army vehicles by train—made impossible because of many low bridges over the rail lines. [REDACTED]

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The force conducted multibrigade attacks during daylight and at night, carried out a parachute assault supported by tanks, and built several bridges under simulated combat conditions. Firepower was heavy and accurate as live ammunition was used safely throughout the training, [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] however, that the troops disregarded camouflage and concealment and ignored the possibility of air attack. Personnel riding in armored vehicles needlessly exposed themselves to

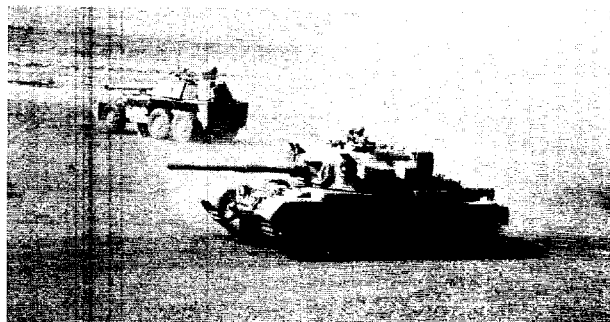
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¹ The press reported units participating in the exercise included the 7th Division's headquarters (from Johannesburg), 71st Motorized Brigade (Cape Town), and 72nd Mechanized Brigade (Johannesburg), as well as elements of the 8th Division (Pretoria). The cost was budgeted over three fiscal years and minimized through careful planning. Salaries and support fees were reduced by activating unit commanders early for planning, and only later mobilizing their troops as required by the training scenario. Some costs of the exercise would have been incurred in any case, because South Africa reservists routinely train each year. [REDACTED]

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South African tanks and new self-propelled G-6 artillery piece in use during operation Thunder Chariot. [redacted]

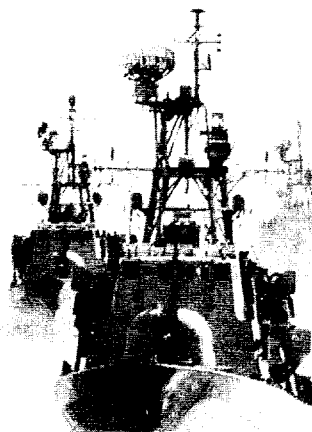
Paratus ©

simulated hostile fire, maneuvered without taking standard precautions for mutual support, and apparently could not fire the vehicles' main gun without halting first. [redacted]

The showcase exercise advertised South African military might, and Defense Minister Malan bragged to journalists that such a force "could go right through to Cairo." Swaziland's Minister of Defense and his entourage were the guests of South African military intelligence and were given front-row seats for the final demonstration, [redacted]

[redacted] Invitees from the black homelands, several South American countries, and the embassies in Pretoria were in the viewing stand. President Botha presided over the ceremonies, and subsequent media exposure was extensive. [redacted]

Chief of the Army Lieutenant General Geldenhuys told troops participating in Thunder Chariot that the Battle School at Lohatla is to become the western headquarters of South Africa's border defenses, according to the press. If so, Lohatla will either be the site of a new headquarters, or the North Western Command in Potchefstroom will move 450 kilometers closer to Namibia. The exercise tested procedures and forces earmarked for the command, in our view. In addition, the 1984 Defense White Paper reported a portion of the highway at the Battle School is to be reinforced and widened to serve as a contingency airfield, an economical measure that will make it possible to base air operations there. These improved defenses will be similar to those already in place in the north along South Africa's frontiers with



South African missile boats under way during the exercise near Cape Town. [redacted]

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Mozambique, Swaziland, Zimbabwe, and eastern Botswana. [redacted]

Naval Maneuvers. A one-day exercise by a seven-vessel task force near Cape Town in April 1984 was South Africa's largest such maneuvers since naval cooperation with Britain ceased in the 1970s. All five operational guided-missile boats based at Durban participated, along with the Navy's only frigate and one of three submarines. The only significant combatants not included were the two remaining submarines, a few mine warfare vessels, and three missile boats in storage. The maneuvers successfully tested seamanship, antisubmarine capabilities, and gunnery against air and surface targets, [redacted]

The display probably was intended to restore the Navy's reputation following the sinking of its flagship as a result of poor seamanship in February 1982 and the conviction in December 1983 of a Soviet spy and past commander of the Simonstown Naval Base. Defense Minister Malan, Chief of the Armed Forces General Viljoen, and the defense spokesmen for the two major opposition parties were invited to observe the exercise from the deck of the Navy's sole remaining frigate. [redacted]

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Air Support. The South African Air Force participated in both exercises. A simulated battle for air superiority early in operation Thunder Chariot included dogfights between seven South Africans and an Israeli pilot, all flying South African Mirage jet fighters, according to a source of the US air attache in Pretoria. [redacted] outflow the South Africans. Airstrikes by Mirage and Impala fighter-bombers, however, and high-altitude bombing by Canberra bombers, [redacted]
[redacted]

are composed mostly of reservists, or risk deterioration of its deterrent. South Africa also is concerned about a possible Soviet threat to its long shoreline, and it is attempting to develop the shipbuilding and other skills necessary to expand and upgrade its tiny coastal defense force into a navy capable of operations farther from shore. [redacted]

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During the naval operations, a Shackleton marine reconnaissance aircraft provided over-the-horizon targeting to extend the firing range of the missile boats, [redacted]

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A helicopter operated from the frigate's deck to demonstrate a capability for replenishing ships at sea and conducting search and rescue operations beyond the range of shore-based helicopters. [redacted]

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Outlook

Although the northern Cape Province is naturally protected by the Orange River and Kalahari Desert, we would expect to see some military construction and organization of forces along the unfortified border prior to Namibian independence. Terrain and existing roads and rail lines confine the possibilities for a large invasion of western South Africa to routes through Namibia currently blocked by South African troops stationed in the territory. Although improvements to South African border defenses are encouraging signs that Pretoria is contemplating withdrawing its troops from Namibia, the preparations do not necessarily imply a withdrawal is imminent. [redacted]

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In our judgment, South Africa will remain the dominant military power in southern Africa for years to come despite the provision of Soviet and other arms to the region. The regime in Pretoria is favored by geography, greater unity than its neighbors, powerful military forces, and a high degree of self-sufficiency in arms production. Nonetheless, Pretoria must conduct exercises with its conventional forces, which

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Zambia: Troubled Economy

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Zambia faces continuing economic turmoil caused by the low price of copper, which accounts for about 90 percent of export earnings, and by Lusaka's past neglect of agriculture. Moreover, unless copper prices rebound soon, which we do not expect, economic difficulties appear likely to increase.

President Kaunda committed his government in 1980, and again at Zambia's national convention last July, to reduce dependence on copper exports by raising food prices to encourage farm production. He also called for massive investment in agriculture. Kaunda's initiatives have been frustrated by the crippling drought that has devastated agriculture throughout southern Africa for the past three years. As with other countries in the region, the high priority attached to food imports during the drought has deprived Zambia's manufacturing sector of foreign currency to purchase critical inputs. This has contributed to a slowdown of industry, which now operates at about 40 percent of capacity.

Unemployment—which we believe may be running at nearly 40 percent in urban areas—and higher food prices have heightened tensions between labor leaders and the government. Zambian officials have grown increasingly frustrated over the independent power exerted by the Zambian Congress of Trade Unions,

the government was upset by the union's success in obtaining wage increases to compensate for higher food prices.

Good rains would ease Zambia's immediate troubles, but its long-term economic prospects remain poor. Nearly half of the population, whose growth rate exceeds 3 percent per year, lives in urban areas, and many have little chance for gainful employment. If Lusaka acts on its plans to relocate urban unemployed by force, discontent will grow. Partly as a result of these economic difficulties, President Kaunda has turned more toward the West, concluding an IMF

Zambia: Copper Prices and Production Trends

Year	Average Prices (dollars per pound)		Production (thousand metric tons)
	Current Prices	Constant 1982 Prices	
1974	0.93	1.55	702
1975	0.56	0.82	640
1976	0.64	0.91	713
1977	0.59	0.79	660
1978	0.62	0.70	656
1979	0.90	0.91	588
1980	0.99	0.92	596
1981	0.79	0.77	587
1982	0.67	0.67	530
1983	0.72	0.74	515

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agreement and rescheduling loans with several major bilateral lenders.

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Over the long run, Zambia must redress the past neglect of its considerable agricultural potential. The price of copper appears unlikely to rebound significantly during the remainder of this decade because of weak demand and abundant world copper-producing capacity. Moreover, Zambian copper reserves are expected to last less than 20 years. Lusaka's efforts to diversify exports by promoting agriculture over mining and industry, however, probably will continue to raise conflicts between the unions and the government.

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Seychelles: Rene Jittery After Coup Attempt [REDACTED]

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President Rene, reportedly uncertain whom to trust in the aftermath of a coup attempt last September, has been ineffective thus far in consolidating his authority and restoring confidence in his leadership. He has not yet identified those responsible for planning the coup and, as a result, has grown increasingly reclusive, according to US Embassy reporting. Rene appears unwilling or unable, at least temporarily, to resolve longstanding problems that could affect the stability of his regime. In our judgment, Rene must restrain bitter power struggles in his cabinet and military, revitalize an apathetic party, and reduce domestic tension to forestall further attempts to overthrow him.

Coping With Power Struggles

Power struggles among factions in the government and military continue to disrupt policymaking. In the past, Rene's divide and rule tactics—assigning crosscutting responsibilities to ambitious ministers—had been an effective tool for retaining final authority in government affairs. As Rene has become withdrawn and mistrustful of even his key supporters, however, political infighting has intensified, further contributing to the breakdown of government unity. Three cabinet rivals and potential power brokers—Defense Minister Berlouis, Development Minister Hodoul, and Education and Information Minister Michel—reportedly are taking advantage of the situation by attempting to usurp one another's responsibilities. [REDACTED]

In our view, Rene probably believes that, of the three ministers, Berlouis poses the greatest threat. The opportunistic Berlouis has backed Rene since they rose to power when Rene led a coup in 1977. Berlouis espouses no particular ideology, but has built up considerable influence in the Army. In an attempt to limit Berlouis's support in the military, Rene reportedly has replaced the commander of the key unit at Point Larue, reducing to second in command an officer loyal to the Defense Minister. Despite

Rene's moves against him, Berlouis appears confident of his position. We believe he would respond to further efforts by Rene to undermine him by casting his lot with opposition elements intent on destabilizing the regime. [REDACTED]

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Hodoul and Michel, firm socialist ideologues, continue to vie for Rene's ear on internal policy. Hodoul's influence is largely confined to party ideology and economic affairs, however, and has declined steadily since the loss of his foreign affairs portfolio in late 1982. According to Embassy reporting, Rene has used Hodoul as a scapegoat for socialist economic policies that have aroused unexpectedly strong popular opposition. [REDACTED]

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On the other hand, [REDACTED] Rene fully trusts Michel. In his capacity as deputy secretary general of the ruling party, Michel has been tasked with establishing a peoples' militia, intended to provide Rene with a trusted alternative to the Army. This force almost certainly will worsen tensions between Michel and Berlouis. [REDACTED]

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A Moribund Party

The Seychelles People's Progressive Front, the only legal political party since 1978, is tasked with mobilizing popular support for Rene's "socialist revolution." The party carries out political education at all levels of society through its youth, women's, and worker's groups; provides guidelines for media reporting; and works for the development of a centralized economy. Rene consolidated his control over party affairs further when he was elected secretary general at the party congress in June. [REDACTED]

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The party's public image recently has become tarnished, however, as government officials carry their power struggles over to the party hierarchy. In

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addition, lingering popular anti-Soviet sentiment has hampered efforts to rally support for the party among the people, and morale is deteriorating. The Embassy reports that, since the aborted coup attempt, rank-and-file party members have grown openly critical of socialism and of Rene's inability to instill unity. []

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Continuing Domestic Tension

Tensions remain high in the aftermath of the coup attempt. Embassy reporting indicates that Rene has done little in recent weeks to convince the public he is sincerely concerned with addressing popular grievances. For example, he has made only token gestures to assuage popular fears he is closely aligned with the Soviet Union. More significantly, Rene continues to ignore the politically sensitive issues of human rights violations and widespread opposition to economic policies. He has honored his pledge to allow religious institutions to speak out against the government, but the result has been sustained antigovernment sentiment, as leading church activist Bishop Felix Paul has relentlessly challenged Rene to respond to these issues. []

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Outlook

Rene's apparent lack of leadership could threaten the long-term stability of his regime. Should he continue to portray an image of weakness, potential opponents may attempt to capitalize on his vulnerability and seek new opportunities to remove him from power. Any likely successor government probably would attempt, at least initially, to distance itself from Rene's unpopular pro-Soviet orientation. []

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**Malawi-Mozambique:
The Machel Visit**

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In the first state visit between the two countries since Mozambican independence in 1975, President Banda of Malawi hosted Mozambican President Machel from 19 to 23 October 1984. Machel sought a meeting with Banda after the Malawian Government refused to join in a multinational border guard to deal with increased guerrilla activity along their common frontier since August.

Tangible Results

The historic visit—the first personal contact between the two heads of state—was capped by the signing of numerous cooperation agreements. The most important of these was a security agreement that pledges each nation will not allow its territory to be used by forces opposed to the other to launch “violent acts of terrorism or aggression.” According to press reports, an agreement on border security also was signed.

Although full implementation appears beyond the capabilities of either government, the document signals a warming trend in relations between the two nations. Mozambique has long asserted that Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO) guerrillas use Malawian territory for at least logistic purposes. Although Malawi recently ousted several known RENAMO figures, Mozambican officials have continued to accuse the Banda regime of allowing South Africa to use Malawian territory “to support the bandits.”

Other agreements signed during the visit deal with trade, energy, railways, and air services. The joint communique issued at the end of the visit cites both countries’ support for the Namibian people through implementation of UN Resolution 435, but does not mention South Africa. In addition, both countries pledged their support for the sovereignty of Angola.

Behind the Scenes

President Banda originally asked Machel to join in Malawi’s independence celebrations, but, according to US Embassy sources, the Mozambican President responded that he did not wish to come as a tourist, and insisted instead on substantive discussions on cooperation. The Mozambicans reportedly brought along fully drafted cooperation agreements which they expected their Malawian counterparts to sign. The Malawian negotiators were told that any changes they wished to incorporate would have to be referred to Maputo for action.

Banda himself was not involved in the talks, stating publicly that it was the task of his ministers to discuss the proposals and make recommendations to him. In the end, the Malawians gave in on both rhetoric and issues to which they had originally objected—such as establishing a Lilongwe-Maputo air route rather than one linking Lilongwe and Beira, which is more practical as a route for Malawian exports. Banda signed all the agreements, but he did not allow the text of the joint communique to be printed in the local press because he did not like the tone of the rhetoric, according to US Embassy reporting. Embassy sources report Banda considers the signing of these agreements more important than the details—which he believes can be altered later.

Outlook

Malawi is caught between the RENAMO insurgents and Machel’s government. As a landlocked nation, Malawi can ill afford to be at odds with the Government of Mozambique since its shortest, least expensive transport routes are through the Mozambican ports of Nacala and Beira. On the other

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hand, the anti-Mozambican guerrillas have constantly interrupted traffic on vital rail lines leading to the Mozambican ports. [redacted]

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Despite the optimism surrounding the signing of the security agreement, neither Mozambique nor Malawi has the military strength to secure the 700-mile length of their common border. Banda almost certainly realizes the agreement is primarily symbolic, but probably views the visit as a springboard to effect better relations with other neighboring states and end Malawi's isolation in the region. Machel probably hopes to use Malawi—the only state in the region with diplomatic ties to South Africa—to help improve his country's relations with Pretoria. Although Machel probably understands that Malawi will not be able to control its border, he undoubtedly plans to press Banda to be tougher on the guerrillas.

According to US Embassy reports, Machel has indicated that a lasting improvement in relations with the Banda regime would be contingent upon Malawi's upholding commitments made in the agreement. [redacted]

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Banda reportedly was pleased that Mozambique and other countries were beginning to recognize the "wisdom of his foreign policies"—his pro-West stance and his good relations with South Africa. US Embassy officials report that Banda intends to try to influence Machel to move away from Eastern powers—whose assistance has failed to solve his internal security problems—by example rather than by words. [redacted]

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Kenya: Continued Moves Against the Kikuyu [REDACTED]

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President Moi plans over the next year to replace many key government officials from the Kikuyu tribe—Kenya's largest ethnic group—with members of smaller, less influential tribes. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] 55 percent of government employees are Kikuyu, while the tribe comprises only 20 percent of the national population—despite official policy aimed at achieving tribal balance in Kenyan institutions. [REDACTED]

Since the coup attempt in August 1982, Moi has been promoting a coalition of minority ethnic groups—including his own Kalenjin tribe—at the expense of the Kikuyu, who had controlled the political life of Kenya since independence 20 years ago. Through a series of piecemeal moves, he has lessened the tribe's influence in military and economic spheres and has limited Kikuyu access to positions of political power. He has successfully driven from office his chief rival, Constitutional Affairs Minister Charles Njonjo, a prominent but controversial Kikuyu, and recently expelled Njonjo and 14 of his alleged supporters from Kenya Africa National Union (KANU)—Kenya's sole political party. [REDACTED]

Moi recognizes that he is increasingly dependent on support from the military, which until recently was dominated by the Kikuyu. He appears to have the situation under control for now, but recent developments have heightened his concern. Talk of killing the President has become widespread among junior-level Kikuyu officers. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Dissatisfaction with Moi's recent purge of civil servants reportedly is a primary motive, but the officers also are concerned about Moi's efforts to cultivate tribal coalitions that further isolate the Kikuyu. [REDACTED] midlevel Kikuyu officers are becoming less concerned about possible consequences of a strong stand against the President. [REDACTED]

Moi has long been uneasy about heavy Kikuyu representation in the military and consequently has promoted members of his Kalenjin tribe into senior positions. [REDACTED] the largely Kamba and Kalenjin senior ranks of the Army are discriminating against middle-grade Kikuyu officers, who constitute a plurality in grades of colonel and below. [REDACTED]

The coup attempt demonstrated the political volatility of junior officers and enlisted men. Moi and senior officers have kept close tabs on this group since the coup and probably would become aware of any wide-scale plotting. Nonetheless, many of these younger men, who entered the service after independence, clearly are less imbued with the British tradition of an apolitical military than their seniors and probably are influenced by successful coups led by low-ranking military personnel in Ghana and Liberia. [REDACTED]

To date, Moi's political instincts have been sound, and, despite the recent intensification of his tribally motivated efforts, the leaderless Kikuyu do not appear to be coalescing against him. His recent maneuvering to exclude them from positions of power, however, appears to have convinced some Kikuyu members that legitimate means of opposing his policies within the system have been exhausted. If Moi pursues his current policies, we believe Kikuyu frustration can only grow, with an increased likelihood of efforts to assassinate him. [REDACTED]

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Malawi: A Model for Economic Reform

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Malawi's negotiations with the World Bank and the IMF appear to be going well so far. A compromise has been reached on the divestment of Press Corporation, the country's largest parastatal. This issue had been the major obstacle delaying disbursement of the final tranche of Malawi's second structural adjustment loan. Negotiations for a third such loan are now in progress, and an IMF team is in Malawi to work on an agreement for the April 1985–March 1986 fiscal year.

Despite endemic supply problems stemming from inadequate or insecure transportation routes, the Malawian economy has shown promising signs of long-term stability:

- Since Malawi began working with the IMF and the World Bank in 1981, the country's budget deficit has fallen from 10 percent of the GDP to 7.5 percent in the 1983-84 budget year.
- Foreign reserves for the first half of 1984 were substantially larger than during the same period in the previous year.
- Despite foreign exchange shortages for the past three years during which gross foreign reserves averaged about one month's imports, Malawi did not incur payments arrears or deprive local industry and agriculture of necessary inputs.

The Malawian Government has elected not to ask for another rescheduling of official and commercial debts that came due in June and August 1984. This may be a risky strategy because it is expected to cause the debt-service ratio to rise from 16 percent in 1983 to a projected 30 percent by 1985. While the Malawian economy probably could support this increase if export earnings continued to be strong, recent fuel

shortages—which appear to have no immediate solution—and mounting difficulties in transportation of exports are likely to take a big bite out of export revenues.

President Banda's risky decision to recommence regular debt payments, probably reflects his desire to demonstrate to his socialist neighbors that his Western-style economic policies have succeeded. In addition, he probably wants to show foreign investors that Malawi can pay its debts, thereby paving the way for increased development assistance. The aging President appears intent on leaving a solid economy as a legacy to his nation and a testimony to his leadership ability.

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Africa Briefs

Sierra Leone

Stevens Losing Touch?

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Recent moves by 84-year-old President Siaka Stevens may add to the potential for instability in impoverished Sierra Leone. Stevens has offended career military officers by suddenly beefing up his private security force with arms diverted from the Army and special new training. The US Embassy notes the group's expanded mission—which may include crowd control—could be viewed by the military as a reflection of Stevens's lack of faith in the Army's loyalty.

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Stevens's move to enhance his personal security comes at a time of increasing nervousness about the country's economic situation. The IMF recently refused to revive a much-needed \$32 million loan suspended after Stevens put responsibility for allocating the country's foreign exchange in the hands of a committee dominated by his personal cronies, including two powerful Lebanese businessmen. The appearance of growing Lebanese influence in financial affairs could serve as a focus of resentment for a public already dissatisfied with the regime's inept handling of the deteriorating economy.

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West Africa

Fostering Francophone Cooperation

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The West African Economic Community marked its 10th anniversary at a summit earlier this month in Bamako by admitting Benin as its seventh member and by offering membership to Guinea. The original members—Burkina, Ivory Coast, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Senegal—founded the organization, with France's encouragement, as a counterweight to the 16-member Economic Community of West African States founded by Nigeria in 1975.

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The organization remains a pole of attraction for West African francophone states, who find it useful for political consultations. Member countries harbor doubts about the durability of the larger Nigerian-founded group, particularly in light of Nigeria's closure of its borders a year ago to try to combat black-marketing. This move seriously disrupted regional trade, especially for Benin and Niger. []

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Despite its political value, the organization has accomplished relatively little in fostering the area's economies. Regional trade has increased somewhat, but uncomplementary economies and a poor transport network hamper close economic integration. The economic community is also beset by mismanagement and corruption, which was highlighted by the arrest in late October of a former official and Ivory Coast minister, Mohamed Diawara, for misappropriating \$13.3 million in organization funds. []

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